

# Dwight's Journal of Music.

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## Wagner's Imaginary Pilgrimage to Beethoven.\*

(Concluded from Page 44.)

The Englishman, who always watched my attempt with excited attention from his window, had at last received positive information that Beethoven was really not to be approached. He was thoroughly vexed, but immeasurably persevering. My patience, however, was soon exhausted, for I had more reason for it than he. A week had gradually slipped away without the attainment of my object; and the income from my galops by no means permitted me a long residence in Vienna. I gradually began to despair.

I communicated my sorrows to the landlord of the hotel. He smiled, and promised to tell me the reason of my woes if I would swear not to betray it to the Englishman. Foreseeing disaster, I made the vow demanded of me.

"You see," said the trusty landlord, "hosts of Englishmen come here to see Herr von Beethoven and make his acquaintance. This annoys Herr von Beethoven so much, and he has been in such a rage at the impertinence of these people, that he makes it absolutely impossible for any stranger to get admittance to him. He is a singular man, and this may be pardoned in him. It is an excellent thing for my hotel, however, for it is generally liberally patronized by Englishmen, who are compelled by their anxiety to see Herr Beethoven to remain my guests longer than they otherwise would. Since you promise me, however, not to betray me to these gentlemen, I hope to find a means to secure your admission to Herr Beethoven."

This was refreshing; so I had not reached the goal, because I—poor devil—passed for an Englishman! My presentiment was justified—the Englishman was my ruin! I would have left the house at once, for of course every one that lodged there was taken for an Englishman at Beethoven's, and I was already outlawed for this reason; but the landlord's promise restrained me,—that he would bring about an opportunity to see and speak with the master. The Englishman, whom I detested from my soul, had meanwhile begun all sorts of intrigues and bribes, but without result.

So several more fruitless days slipped away, during which the receipts from my galops visibly diminished; till at last the landlord confided to me that I could not fail to meet Beethoven if I would go into a particular beer-garden, whither he went almost daily at a certain hour. At the same time I received from my counselor certain unmistakable descriptions of the personal appearance of the great master, which would enable me to recognize him. I roused myself, and determined not to put off my happiness until to-morrow. It was impossible to catch Beethoven as he went out, for he always left his house by a back way; so there was nothing left for me but the beer-garden. Unfortunately, however, I looked there for the master both on this and the two following days without success.

At last on the fourth day, as I again directed my steps to the momentous beer-garden at the appointed hour, I perceived to my horror that the Englishman was cautiously and observantly following me at a distance. The wretch, perpetually watching at his window, had not let the fact escape him that I went out every day at the same hour and in the same direction. He had been struck by this, and at once suspecting that I had found some clue by which

to trace out Beethoven, he had decided to take advantage of my presumed discovery. He told me all this with the greatest frankness, and forthwith declared that he proposed to follow me everywhere. In vain were all my endeavors to deceive him, or to make him believe that I had no other purpose in view than to visit, for my own refreshment, a beer-garden that was far too unfashionable to be worth the consideration of a gentleman like him; he kept steadfastly to his resolution, and I had my luck to curse for it. At last I tried rudeness, and sought to rid myself of him by insolence; far from letting himself be influenced by this, however, he contented himself with a gentle smile. His fixed idea was—to see Beethoven; nothing else disturbed him in the least.

In truth, it was to be; on this day I was for the first time to behold the great Beethoven. No words can picture my ecstasy—or at the same time describe my rage—as, seated beside my "gentleman," I saw approaching a man whose carriage and appearance fully bore out the description that the landlord had given me of the master. The long blue overcoat, the tangled, bristling grey hair, and more than these the features, the expression of the face, as they had long hovered before my imagination, pictured from an excellent portrait. No mistake was possible; I had recognized him in an instant! He passed us with short and hurried steps; surprise and reverence enchaind my senses.

The Englishman missed none of my movements; he looked with curiosity at the newcomer, who withdrew into the most secluded corner of the beer-garden,—at this hour almost deserted,—ordered wine, and then remained for a time in an attitude of deep thought. My beating heart said to me—"It is he!" For a moment I forgot my neighbor, and looked with curious eye and unspeakable emotion upon the man whose genius had alone ruled over all my thoughts and feelings since I had learned to think and feel. Involuntarily I began to murmur softly to myself, and fell into a kind of soliloquy that ended with the but too distinctly uttered words—"Beethoven—it is thou, then, whom I see!"

Nothing escaped my accursed neighbor, who, bending close beside me, had listened with bated breath to my murmuring. I was roused in horror from my deep ecstasy by the words—"Yes, this gentleman is Beethoven! Come, let us introduce ourselves at once!"

Filled with anxiety and disgust I held the cursed Englishman back by the arm.

"What are you going to do?" I cried—"do you mean to disgrace us? Here—in such a place—so utterly without regard to common courtesy?"

"Oh," responded he, "it's a capital opportunity; we shan't easily find a better one."

With this he drew a kind of note-book from his pocket, and would have rushed forthwith upon the man in the blue overcoat. Beside myself, I seized the lunatic by the skirts of his coat, and cried out furiously, "Are you stark mad?"

This proceeding had attracted the attention of the stranger. He seemed to guess, with painful annoyance, that he was the subject of our excitement, and after he had hastily emptied his glass he rose to go away. Hardly had the Englishman perceived this than he tore himself from me with such force that he left one of his coat-skirts in my hand, and threw himself in Beethoven's path. The latter sought to avoid him; but the wretch was before him, and making him a marvellous bow according to the lat-

est English fashion, addressed him as follows:

"I have the honor to introduce myself to that very famous composer and most estimable man—Herr Beethoven."

He had no need to add anything further, for with his first words Beethoven, casting a single glance upon me, had turned away with a hasty start to one side, and had vanished from the garden with the speed of lightning. Not the less did the irrepressible Briton show his intention to pursue the fugitive, when I seized, in a fury of rage, on the remnant of his coat skirts. Somewhat astonished, he checked himself, and cried out in a singular tone:

"Damn it! This gentleman is worthy to be an Englishman, and I shall certainly make no delay in forming his acquaintance!"

I stood there stupefied; this terrible adventure put an end to every hope of mine to see the dearest wish of my heart fulfilled!

It was very clear to me that from this time forth every attempt to approach Beethoven in an ordinary fashion must be perfectly vain. In my ruinous circumstances I had only to decide whether I would at once enter upon my homeward journey with my object unaccomplished, or whether I should make one last desperate endeavor to reach my goal. At the first alternative I shuddered to the bottom of my soul. Who, so near as this to the gates of the holy of holies, could see them close upon him without being fairly annihilated? Before I gave up the salvation of my soul, then, I would make one more desperate attempt. But what step was there for me to take—what way left for me to pursue? For a long time I could think of nothing definite. Alas, all consciousness was numbed; nothing presented itself to my imagination but the remembrance of what I had passed through when I held the vile Englishman's coat-skirts in my hands. Beethoven's side glance at my unlucky self during this frightful catastrophe had not escaped me; I felt what such a glance must mean; he had—taken me for an Englishman!

What should I do then, to elude the wrath of the master? Everything depended on informing him that I was a simple German soul, full of worldly poverty, but more than worldly enthusiasm.

So I decided at last to pour out my heart,—to write. I did so; told him briefly the history of my life; how I had become a musician; how I idolized him; how I had longed to make his acquaintance; how I had given up two years to gaining a reputation as a composer of galops; how I had begun and ended my pilgrimage; what woes the Englishman had brought upon me, and in what a cruel situation I now found myself. As I felt my heart grow consciously lighter during this summary of my griefs, I even passed into a certain degree of confidence, from the pleasure of this feeling; I mingled in my letter some frank and rather decided complaints of the unjust cruelty with which I, poor devil, had been treated by the master. I closed my letter with absolute enthusiasm; my eyes swam as I wrote the address—"to Herr Ludwig von Beethoven." I uttered a silent prayer, and myself delivered the letter at Beethoven's house.

As I returned to my hotel, full of enthusiasm—great Heaven! what brought the horrible Englishman again before my eyes? He had watched this last errand also from his window; he had seen on my features the happiness of hope, and this was enough to deliver me again into his power. He stopped me on the steps with the question, "Good news? When shall we see Beethoven?"

\*From *Art Life and Theories* of RICHARD WAGNER. Translated by E. L. Burlingame.

"Never! never!" cried I in despair—"Beethoven will never in his life see you again! Let me go, villain! We have nothing in common!"

"Most decidedly we have something in common," responded he, coldly; "where is the skirt of my coat, sir? Who authorized you to forcibly deprive me of it? Do you know, sir, that you are to blame for the behavior of Beethoven toward me? How was he to find it *en règle* to permit the acquaintance of a gentleman with only one coat-skirt?"

Furious at seeing the fault thus cast upon me, I cried—"You shall have the coat-skirt back, sir! Treasure it up as a shameful reminder of the way in which you insulted the great Beethoven, and ruined a poor musician!—Farewell! may we never see each other again!"

He sought to restrain me, and to pacify me by assuring me that he had still a large number of coats in the best possible condition; I must tell him when Beethoven would receive us. But I rushed past him up into my fifth story; and there I locked myself in and waited for Beethoven's answer.

But how shall I describe what passed within me—around me—when I really received within an hour a little piece of note-paper on which was hastily written—"Pardon me, Herr R—, if I ask you to call for the first time to-morrow morning; for I am at work to get off a packet of music by post. I expect you to-morrow. Beethoven."

First of all I sank upon my knees and thanked Heaven for this marvellous boon; my eyes were clouded with burning tears. But at length my emotions broke loose in the wildest joy; I sprang up and danced about my little bedroom like a madman. I hardly know what I danced; but I remember that to my infinite shame I suddenly became aware that I was accompanying myself by whistling a galop. This unhappy discovery brought me to myself again; I left my room and the hotel, and rushed into the streets of Vienna fairly drunken with delight.

Heavens! My woes had made me utterly forget that I was in Vienna! How the lively stir of the people of the imperial city delighted me! I was in an enthusiastic mood, and saw everything with enthusiastic eyes. The somewhat superficial sensuousness of the Viennese seemed the fresh warmth of life; their frivolous and not very fastidious pursuit of pleasure passed for natural and frank appreciation of the beautiful. I looked over the five daily theatre-bills; on one of them I saw announced "*Fidelio*,"—opera by Beethoven."

I must go to the theatre, be the receipts from my galops ever so sadly lessened! As I came into the parquette the overture began. This was the rearrangement of the opera that had once—to the honor of the highly critical public of Vienna—failed, under the title of "*Leonore*." Even in this later form I had nowhere been able to produce it; and the delight may be imagined, which I experienced as I now heard for the first time this glorious novelty. A very young girl rendered the rôle of Leonore; yet this singer seemed even in her early youth to have fairly wed herself to the genius of Beethoven. With what ardor, poetic feeling, deep emotion did she depict this wonderful woman! Her name was Wilhelmine Schröder. She had gained for herself the noble merit of opening Beethoven's work to the German public; for I saw that evening, that even the superficial Viennese were roused to thorough enthusiasm. For me the very heavens were opened; all was illuminated for me, and I bowed down before the Genius that had led me like Florestan—from night and chains to light and liberty.

That night I could not sleep. What I had just gone through and what awaited me on the morrow, was too great and overwhelming to have let me carry it quietly into my dreams. I lay awake; I wandered; I prepared myself to appear before Beethoven. At last the day appeared; I waited with impatience for a time

suitable for a morning call; it came, and I started forth. The most important event of my life stood before me; I trembled at the thought.

But I was to pass through a terrible trial. Leaning against Beethoven's door-post there awaited me with great sang-froid, my demon—the Englishman! The villain had bribed everybody—finally even the landlord. The latter had read Beethoven's open note before I had seen it myself, and had betrayed its contents to the Briton.

A cold sweat burst from me at the sight. All romance, all divine ecstasy disappeared. I was again in *his* power.

"Come," said the wretch, "let us introduce ourselves to Beethoven!"

At first I thought of helping myself out of the difficulty with a lie, and asserting that I was not on the way to Beethoven at all. But he at once deprived me of all possibility of refuge, by explaining to me with the greatest candor that he had discovered my secret; and declaring that he would not leave me till we had seen Beethoven. I sought at first to dissuade him good-humoredly from his design—in vain. I fell into a rage;—in vain. Finally I hoped to escape him by fleetness of foot. I flew up the steps like an arrow, and jerked at the bell like a madman. But before the door was opened the man stood beside me, seized the skirt of my coat and said: "Don't run away from me! I have a right to your coat-skirts, and I'll hold fast by them until we stand in Beethoven's presence."

I turned upon him in a fury, and struggled to free myself; I even felt tempted to defend myself by physical force against the proud son of Albion—when suddenly the door was opened. An old servant appeared, frowning as she discovered us in our extraordinary position; and seemed about to shut the door again upon us. In my anxiety I called my name aloud, and affirmed that I had been invited by Herr Beethoven himself.

The old woman was still in doubt, for the sight of the Englishman seemed to rouse in her a very just suspicion,—when suddenly, as luck would have it, Beethoven himself appeared at the door of his study. Taking advantage of this moment, I rushed quickly in, and sought to approach the master to excuse myself. But I dragged in the Englishman with me, for he clung to me still. He carried out his purpose, and did not let me go until we stood before Beethoven. I bowed, and stammered out my name; and though he certainly did not understand it, he seemed to know that I was the one who had written to him. He motioned to me to go into his room; and without being in the least disturbed by Beethoven's amazed look, my companion slipped hastily in after me.

Here I was—in the sanctuary; but the horrible embarrassment into which the villainous Britisher had led me robbed me of all that beneficent mood that was necessary to worthily enjoy my good fortune. Beethoven's appearance was certainly not in itself adapted to have an agreeable and soothing effect. He was in a somewhat disorderly dishabille: he wore a red woollen belt around his body; long, stiff, gray hair hung in disorder about his head; and his gloomy, repellent expression did not tend to allay my confusion. We sat down at a table covered with pens and paper.

There was a decided feeling of awkwardness; no one spoke. Beethoven was evidently out of temper at having to receive two persons instead of one.

At last he began by saying in a harsh voice—"You come from L—?"

I was about to answer, but he interrupted me; laying a pencil and sheet of paper before me, he added:—"Write; I cannot hear."

I knew of Beethoven's deafness, and had prepared myself for it. Nevertheless it went through my heart like a pang when I heard his harsh and broken voice say "I cannot hear." To live in the world joyless and in poverty; to find one's only exalted happiness in the power

of music—and to have to say "I cannot hear!" In one moment there came to me the full understanding of Beethoven's manner, of the deep sorrow in his face, of the gloomy sadness of his glance, of the firm-set haughtiness of his lips:—*he could not hear!*

Confused, and without knowing what I said, I wrote an entreaty for his pardon and a brief explanation of the circumstances that had forced me to appear in the company of the Englishman. The latter sat silent and contented opposite Beethoven, who, when he had read my words, turned to him rather sharply with the inquiry what he desired from him?

"I have the honor"—replied the Briton. "I can't understand you," cried Beethoven, hastily interrupting him. "I cannot hear, and I can speak but little. Write down what you want with me."

The Englishman quietly reflected for a moment, then drew an elegant music-book from his pocket, and said to me "Good.—Write—I request Herr Beethoven to look at this composition of mine; if he find a passage that does not please him, he will have the kindness to mark a cross against it."

I wrote down his request literally, in the hope that we might thus get rid of him. And such was really the result. After Beethoven had read it, he laid the Englishman's composition on the table with a peculiar smile, nodded abruptly, and said "I will send it to you."

With this my "gentleman" was content. He rose, made an especially magnificent bow, and took his leave. I drew a long breath;—he was gone.

Now for the first time I felt myself in the very sanctuary. Even Beethoven's features grew obviously brighter; he looked quietly at me for a moment, and began:

"The Englishman has caused you no little trouble?" said he. "Find consolation with me; these travelling Englishmen have tortured me to death. They come to-day to see a poor musician as they would go to-morrow to look at some rare animal. I am heartily sorry to have confounded you with him.—You wrote me that you were pleased with my compositions. I am glad of that, for I have little confidence now in pleasing people with my productions."

This cordiality in addressing me soon did away with all my embarrassment; a thrill of joy ran through me at these simple words. I wrote that I was by no means the only one filled with such ardent enthusiasm for every one of his creations, as to have no dearer wish than, for instance, to gain for my native city the happiness of seeing him once in its midst;—that he might then convince himself what effect his works produced upon the public.

"I can well believe," he answered, "that my compositions are more appreciated in North Germany. The Viennese often provoke me; they hear too much wretched stuff every day, to be always in the mood to take an earnest interest in anything serious."

I sought to combat this view, and instanced the fact that I had yesterday attended a performance of "*Fidelio*," which the Viennese public had received with the most obvious enthusiasm.

"Hm! Hm!" muttered the master,—"The '*Fidelio*!' But I know that the people only applaud it out of vanity, after all, for they imagine that in my rearrangement of the opera I only followed their advice. So they seek to reward me for my trouble, and cry bravo! It's a good-natured, uneducated populace; so I like better to be among it than among wise people. Does '*Fidelio*' please you?"

I told him of the impression that the performance of the day before had made upon me, and remarked that the whole had gained most gloriously by the additions that had been made to it.

"It is vexatious work," said Beethoven; "I am no composer of operas; at least I know of no theatre in the world for which I would care to compose an opera again. If I should make



an opera according to my own conception, the people would absolutely flee from it: for there would be no airs, duets, trios, and all that nonsense to be found in it, with which operas are stitched together nowadays;—and what I would substitute for these no singer would sing and no audience hear. They all know nothing deeper than brilliant falsehoods, sparkling nonsense, and sugar-coated dulness. The man who created a true musical drama would be looked upon as a fool—and would be one in very truth if he did not keep such a thing to himself, but wanted to bring it before the public."

"And how should one go to work," I asked excitedly, "to produce such a musical drama?"

"As Shakespeare did when he wrote his plays"—was the almost angry answer. Then he continued: "The man who has to trouble himself with fitting all sorts of brilliant prattle to women with passable voices, so that they may gain applause by it, should make himself a Parisian man-milliner, not a dramatic composer. For myself, I am not made for such trifling. I know very well that certain wise-aces say of me for this reason that though I have some ability in instrumentation I should never be at home in vocal music. They are right—for they understand by vocal music only operatic music; and as for my being at home in that—Heaven forbid!"

I ventured to ask if he really thought that any one, after hearing his "Adelaide," would dare to deny him the most brilliant genius for vocal music also?"

"Well," he said after a short pause, "'Adelaide' and things of that kind are small matters, after all, that soon fall into the hands of the professional virtuosi—to serve them as opportunities to bring out their brilliant art-touches. Why should not vocal music form a great and serious *genre* by itself as well as instrumental,—that should receive as much respect from the frivolous tribe of singers in its execution, as is demanded of an orchestra in the production of a symphony. The human voice exists. It is a far more beautiful and noble organ of tone than any instrument of an orchestra. Ought it not to be brought into as independent use as this latter? What new results might not be gained by such a method! For it is precisely the character of the human voice, utterly different by nature from the peculiarities of an instrument, that could be brought out and retained, and could be capable of the most varying combinations. In instruments, the primal organs of creation and nature find their representation; they cannot be sharply determined and defined, for they but repeat primal feelings as they came forth from the chaos of the first creation, when there were perhaps no human beings in existence to receive them in their hearts. With the genius of the human voice it is entirely otherwise; this represents the human heart, and its isolated, individual emotion. Its character is therefore limited, but fixed and defined. Let these two elements be brought together, then; let them be united! Let those wild primal emotions that stretch out into the infinite, that are represented by instruments, be contrasted with the clear, definite emotions of the human heart, represented by the human voice. The addition of the second element will work beneficently and soothingly upon the conflict of the elemental emotions, and give to their course a well-defined and united channel; and the human heart itself, in receiving these elemental emotions, will be immeasurably strengthened and broadened; and made capable of feeling clearly what was before an uncertain presage of the highest ideal, now changed into a divine knowledge."

Beethoven paused here a moment, as if fatigued. Then, with a light sigh, he continued:—"It is true that many obstacles are met with in the attempt to solve this problem; in order to sing one has need of words. But what man could put into words the poetry that must form the basis of such a union of elements? Poetry

must stand aside here; for words are too weak things for this task.—You will soon hear a new composition of mine which will remind you of what I am now explaining. It is a symphony with choruses. I call your attention to the difficulty I had in this, in getting over the obstacle of the inadequacy of the poetry which I required to help me. Finally I decided to choose our Schiller's beautiful "Hymn to Joy;" this is at least a noble and elevating creation, even though it is far from expressing what in this case, it is true, no verses in the world could express."

Even now I can hardly comprehend the happiness that I enjoyed in the fact that Beethoven himself should thus help me by these explanations to the full understanding of his last giant symphony, which at that time must have been barely finished, but which was as yet known to no one. I expressed to him my enthusiastic thanks for this certainly rare condescension. At the same time I expressed the delighted surprise that he had given me in this news that the appearance of a new and great work of his composition might soon be looked for. Tears stood in my eyes—I could have kneeled before him.

Beethoven seemed to perceive my emotion. He looked at me half sorrowfully, half with a mocking smile, as he said: "You will be able to be my defender when my new work is spoken of—think of me then; the wise people will believe me mad—at all events they will call me so. Yet you see, Herr R—, that I am not exactly a madman,—though I might be unhappy enough to be one. People demand of me that I shall write according to their conception of what is beautiful and good; but they do not reflect that I, the poor deaf man, must have thoughts that are all my own,—that it is impossible for me to compose otherwise than as I feel. And that I cannot think and feel the things that *they* deem beautiful," he added ironically, "that is my misfortune!"

With this he rose and strode up and down the room with short, quick strides. Deeply moved as I was, I also rose—I felt myself trembling. It would have been impossible for me to continue the conversation either by pantomime or writing. I perceived that the time had come when my visit might grow burdensome to the master. To write my deep-felt thanks and my farewell, seemed cold; I contented myself by taking my hat, standing before Beethoven, and letting him read in my eyes what was passing within me.

He seemed to understand me. "You are going?" he asked. "Do you remain any time longer in Vienna?"

I wrote that I had no other aim in this journey than to become acquainted with him; that as he had deemed me worthy of such an unusual reception, I was more than happy to find my goal reached, and should start the next day on my return.

He answered, smiling, "You wrote to me how you furnished yourself with money for this journey. You should stay here in Vienna and make galops—they are popular wares here."

I declared that all that was over for me, for that I knew nothing that could ever again seem to me to deserve such a sacrifice.

"Well, well," he said, "perhaps something will yet be found! I—fool that I am—should be far better off if I made galops; if I go on as I have hitherto, I shall always be in want. *Bon voyage!*" he went on; "bear me in mind, and console yourself with me in all your trials!"

Deeply moved, and with tears in my eyes, I was about to take my leave, when he called to me—"Wait! Let us finish up the musical Englishman. Let us see where the crosses come in."

With this he seized the Englishman's music-book, and smilingly looked through it; then he carefully folded it up again, wrapped it in paper, took up a heavy music-pen, and drew a gigantic cross across the whole wrapper. And

then he handed it to me with the remark, "Kindly return the fortunate being his masterpiece. He is an ass—and yet I envy him his long ears. Farewell, mein Lieber, and remember me in kindness."

With this he dismissed me. Deeply agitated, I passed out of the room and from the house.

At the hotel I met the Englishman's servant, as he was arranging his master's trunk in the travelling carriage. His goal, too, had been reached; I was compelled to confess that he too had shown persistency. I hurried to my room and made my preparations to begin, the next day, my pedestrian journey back again. I had to laugh, as I looked at the cross on the wrapper of the Englishman's composition. Yet the cross was a memorial of Beethoven, and I begrudged it to the evil demon of my pilgrimage. My decision was quickly made. I took the wrapper off, took out my gallops, and wrapped *them* instead in this condemnatory covering. I returned the Englishman his composition without a wrapper, and accompanied it with a note in which I informed him that Beethoven envied him, and that he declared he did not know where to put a cross on such a work.

As I left the hotel I saw my wretched companion getting into his carriage.

"Good-by"—he shouted:—"You have done me a great service. I am delighted to have made Herr Beethoven's acquaintance. Will you go to Italy with me?"

"What are you after there?" asked I in reply.

"I want to make the acquaintance of Rossini—he is a very celebrated composer."

"Good luck!" I called. "I know Beethoven; and with that I have enough for all my life."

We parted. I cast one longing look towards Beethoven's house, and turned to the northward—exalted and ennobled in heart.

### Keyed-Stringed Instruments of Music.

SIR ROBERT STEWART'S LECTURES AT DUBLIN UNIVERSITY.\*

#### VI.

Sir Robert Stewart's sixth and last lecture on keyed instruments was read on Saturday, April 17. That the interest had not diminished was made evident by the crowds who, for an hour or more, waited patiently for the doors to be opened. Within the hall the dais was hung round with engraved portraits of Bach, Mendelssohn, Chopin, Mozart, Purcell, Lully, Stanley, Samuel Wesley, Queen Elizabeth, Mary Queen of Scots, Marie Antoinette, Rev. W. Mason (of York), Mrs. Anastasia Robinson, Mrs. Billington, Princess Czartoryski, and others associated with keyed instruments. Large diagrams of the lyre, psalter, dulcimer, spinet, virginal and clavichord, were suspended on either side. There was a small band of amateur instrumentalists, led by Herr Berzon, who executed the accompaniments to Mendelssohn's piano concerto in D minor (op. 40). The lecture was further illustrated by the performance of two of Chopin's pieces. The *Étude* in A minor (played from memory by Miss A. Wayland) as an example of his vigorous style, when studying under Professor Jos. Elsner, at Warsaw, in 1830; and the *Berceuse* in D flat (played by Miss M. Jones), produced in Paris ten years later, when the composer was suffering from the disease which ultimately destroyed him. Sir R. Stewart said:—

They had traced the history of keyed instruments from yonder representation of the lyre and dulcimer of antiquity, on through the spinet and harpsichord, until the subject culminated in the modern pianoforte. Indeed, they would need a musical Darwin to trace the "origin of species" from the trigon or little three-cornered harp, to the noble Erard grand, of which an example stood before them to-day. The domain of expression had been vastly increased by the adoption of the damper pedal; which, alluded to by Steibelt (1755—1823), in his op. 35, as a novel invention, had, in fact, changed the whole style of pianoforte playing. The early sonatas of Haydn

\* Reported in the London Musical Standard.

partook of the tinkling school, but Beethoven soon began to develop novelties. In his first sonata in F minor, dedicated to Haydn, there were rapid alternating chords of *forte* and *piano*, and in a passage in A flat in one of the "Bagatelles," examples of new damper pedal effects occurred. (The lecturer here played both these passages). The whole method of Thalberg was directly traceable to the damper pedal, as were those pieces for left hand alone, with which Dreyshock, Rudolf Willmer and others, had enriched the piano repertoire. He (Sir R. Stewart) would refer to a further example of a damper pedal effect—a very charming one too, in "Au bord de la mer," of the late lamented W. V. Wallace, an Irishman, and a famous pianist, born in Waterford. (The passage alluded to was played, and consisted of a tenor cantabile, accompanied softly with arpeggiated treble chords.) The style of that truly great artist, Frederic Chopin, was similarly modelled, and was rich in pedal effects drawn by the composer from Pleyel's pianos—instruments whose shallow touch and veiled sonorousness had always an especial charm for the great Polish musician. (Here, by way of comparison of the two manners—the vigorous and dreamy styles of Chopin—the "Study in A minor," and the "Berceuse" were played.)

The compass of keyed instruments had been various; the early clavichord and virginal had about three octaves each; Bach's instruments four octaves from violoncello C in the bass; yet, although most of the 48 preludes and fugues were contained within these limits, the 44th fugue (of which the subject resembled Handel's "And with His stripes we are healed") descended to the bass A below. These limits for keyed instruments were, however, somewhat arbitrary; in some of Bach's organ works, notes were found which he (Sir R. Stewart) had never met with in any organ either in England or abroad. Thus in the G major Fantasia, the pedal descended to the low B natural, and a variation on "In dulci júbilo," was written up to the high F-sharp, limits to which, in Bach's day, no pedal-board extended. In pianofortes, the five upper semitones from F to C, added at the suggestion of Francis Panormo by Messrs. Broadwood, about 1797, were first used at a concert at the Rotunda in Dublin; Constantine, Ferdinand, and Francis Panormo were all *première force* players in those days. The Weber harpsichord (1784), exhibited at a former lecture, had but five octaves and two notes, F below to G above; yet the Shudi harpsichord of Sir F. Ouseley, dating 1773, had reached the low C. Harpsichords continued to be made in England until about 1798, although the pianoforte had then existed twenty years.

The performance of Schroeter (1790) seems to have first brought the piano into general favor, and made the harpsichord give way. The piano was introduced upon the stage in London as a newly invented instrument in 1767 by Dibdin, and in Dublin by Michael Arne in 1779. It had been customary thus to introduce keyed instruments into the theatrical orchestra. A picture of the performance at Versailles in honor of the marriage of Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette shows this, the harpsichord having the lid raised. Mozart did likewise at Milan in 1771; and even so lately as 1826 "Weber" presided at the pianoforte, when "Oberon" was produced at Covent Garden, although, as that opera had no recitatives (being only "a drama with songs," it is not very clear for what the instrument had been introduced. Some allusion having been made to the progress of the piano in Dublin with Panormo and Michael Arne, he (Sir R. Stewart) would refer to one well-known Irish artist, Wm. Southwell, who had rendered great services to the manufacture of the instrument, having improved the dampers, extended the compass, and invented the upright, then termed a "cabinet piano." The upright instrument had altogether superseded the square piano in these islands, and even to some extent the grand. The "Irish damper," as invented by Wm. Southwell, was also famous. His patents date 1794, 1798, 1807 (the cabinet) 1811, 1821, and 1837. It is interesting for Dublin people to recall those days. There were many makers of keyed instruments in this city, although it was but a small town at the time. Now, with all our increased wealth and size, there is not one. We find Ferdinand Weber, harpsichord maker, 71, Marlborough-street (1784); Wm. Southwell, 26, Fleet-street (1784). Southwell's house appears at Marlborough-street, Duke-street, and Abbey-street, until about 40 years ago. There were Edmund Lee, harpsichord maker, 2, Dame-street, 1787; Robert Woffington, 9, William-street (1788, and until 40 years ago); Alex. Jas., and Daniel Macdonnell, harpsichord and piano makers, Church-lane,

and Fleet-street (1795, and for many years after); Jacob Pemberton (1797); David Schroeter, Townsend-street (1798); Thomas Kenny, Mercer-street (1794); Wm. Cooke, Summer-hill (1797). The lecturer could himself recollect Morland, a manufacturer, whose workshops were in Mecklenburgh-street; but the trade must have been languishing, for in 1821, when King George IV. visited Dublin, it was openly stated that Morland did not make ten pianos per annum; whereas last year, in London alone, Mr. Brinsmead sets down ten per week to each maker, and a prodigious aggregate of 104,000 per annum! Herr Pauer's estimate, in 1871, was, however, but 23,000. Nevertheless, these figures represent, in any case, a thriving industry.

Sir R. Stewart now entered into some interesting details with respect to the enormous strain exerted by the strings of a full grand piano—a strain estimated by that eminent artist, Mr. A. J. Hipkins, of Broadwood's, at 15½ tons. Much of this strain was attributable to the thick and highly tenacious modern English wire now employed, the longest bass string in the old grands only equalling the shortest treble string in the modern one. This wire could bear a pull equal to 152 lb., while the old wire would only stand a strain of 50 lb. One great difficulty in grand pianos was in what manner to enable the instrument to be braced, and yet to leave room for the deep gap extending across the entire instrument where the hammers passed through. In the cottage piano this difficulty did not exist, the strings being struck by the hammers upon their upper surface; hence arose the cheapness and simplicity of this form of piano, there being no solution of continuity to be provided for. The American pianoforte makers, represented by two famous houses, Chickering and Steinway, had directed their efforts to abolish the solid bed and bracing of timber which marked European grands; they were so open below the sound board, that one could touch that portion of the instrument by passing the hand under the belly of the piano. The necessary solidity in the string-frame, and its power of resisting the pull to which reference has been made, was obtained in the United States by casting a sort of harp-shaped frame, in one solid piece of metal, to which the strings were made fast. At the first three lectures of the present course, one of these Steinway instruments had been used. It was of admirable quality, and faultless touch; but although the American pianos were said to be very powerful, he did not consider them exceptionally so. At the New York Exposition of 1854, the first prize was awarded to Erard in the most brilliant manner, by the American judges themselves; with, however, the reservation that the American instruments were better suited for their own climate, and its alternations of high and low temperature, than any European grand piano. Sir R. Stewart said the American instruments were also remarkable for an ingenious arrangement by which increased length was secured for some of the bass strings, by running them diagonally under the rest, for a method of causing the hammers to strike the strings either closely or at a distance; also for various adjustment of the string near the tuning-pins, and for some novelties in tone, such as the "Dolce Campana attachment" or sweet bell tone.

The lecturer referred to "color pianos," of which the "ocular harpsichord," of the Jesuit Louis Castel, in 1757, was the earliest example. More modern reference to this subject had been made by Messrs. Jameson, Gardiner of Leicester, and quite recently by Mr. George B. Allen, an Irish musician from Armagh. He (Sir R. Stewart) also spoke of "Sostinente" pianos, designed to remedy one chief drawback in the instrument, the impossibility of prolonging the tone after the key had been struck. Of these devices that of the Rev. Wm. Mason (1765) was among the earliest; that of Adam Walker and of Mott came later. The latter (patented in 1817) had been exhibited many years ago in the house of Mrs. Howard in Merriam-square, Dublin. There had been many "Sostinente" inventions. Keyed instruments had been also made to act on plates of glass; of this sort was the "Harmonica," so admired by Benjamin Franklin. Probably we were now upon the eve of a discovery in keyed instruments which would revolutionize this department of the art. He (Sir R. Stewart) alluded to the very interesting results recently attained by Mr. Baillie Hamilton in connection with strings and harmonium reeds.

To most persons, the keyboard in ordinary use, with its seven white and five black notes, was so familiar that it never occurred to them that more sounds than twelve in an octave could be sought for. One of the first and, perhaps, the most familiar ex-

ample of an effort to obtain a juster intonation, was the well-known division of the semitones in the organ of the Temple church, London, where G sharp and D sharp were divided, and a portion tuned for A flat and E flat. As this arrangement of the keyboard he (Sir R. Stewart) believed now no longer existed in the Temple organ, it might interest them to examine the adjoining large diagram drawn by a young lady for the present lectures, and showing a portion of the Temple keyboard. A piano by Hawkes (1808) had 17 sounds in the octave; one by Loeschmann (1809) had 24; Mr. Liston (1812), and Colonel P. Thompson (1829) had also been distinguished by their efforts to obtain a juster intonation, and to abolish the usual tempered scale on keyed instruments; but after all, custom was so powerful, that it was not likely these complicated keyboards would ever become general, although in the use of colored keys, and keyboards furnished with quarrils, digitals, buttons, and flutals, uncommon ingenuity had been shown by the inventors.

Among subjects closely connected with pianoforte touch was a consideration of the various mechanical appliances which had been invented in order to promote independence of finger. In harpsichord playing little beyond distinctness and accuracy were sought for, but the innumerable niceties of treatment of which the hammer instrument was susceptible, called for a corresponding increase of power and variety of touch. This question had early engaged the attention of the musical world. In Bohemia, about the year 1780, a sort of frame had been used to prevent the pupils' hands being unduly elevated. Dr. Forkel, of Göttingen, the biographer of J. S. Bach, had attached weights to the players' wrists for a similar purpose. The "Chiroplast" of M. Logier, which had been first produced in Dublin about the Year 1816, was familiar to many of those who were present. A portion of it had subsequently been made use of, as the "guide mains" of Kalkbrenner. The late Robert Schumann had, by the indiscreet employment of some mechanism of the sort, so injured his hand as forever to debar him from playing in public. The Dactylion of Henri Herz, produced in Paris about 1845, consisted of a set of rings, one for each finger, suspended over the keys from springs, after the manner of a fishing rod. The practices of 1,000 exercises sold along with the Dactylion was further recommended. This machine had been satirized by the lively Parisians, who represented mice jumping through its rings. The Chiroplast, which was vigorously puffed about 1842, consisted of a small frame some 2 feet by 18 inches, on which were arranged various pieces of mechanism to develop power of stroke, independent of action. He (Sir R. Stewart) had purchased at Pleyel's, in Paris, one of the most useful mechanical aids called "Piano Muet." This dumb piano had been referred to in an amusing article from the *Leipzig Signale*, as "an instrument for which, it is to be lamented, that so little has been composed!" Schumann had said of such things—"Try them, so as to see how little they avail; for you cannot learn speech from the dumb." Cramer, Hummel, Moscheles, Czerny, and other artists generally disapproved of such mechanical aids, the employment of which might, however, in special instances, be attended with decided advantage.

In treating the last section of his subject—the combination of the pianoforte with other instruments—Sir R. Stewart referred to Hector Berlioz's proposed employment of the acute octaves of the pianoforte as a novel quality of orchestral tone; to this, however, there was a serious objection in the cumbersome nature of the pianoforte, even one grand piano making serious calls upon the limited space in an orchestral platform. Hector Berlioz only proposed to make the instrument accessory; it had, however, been long before elevated to the rank of a principal in the noble concertos of Beethoven, Mozart, Weber, Schumann, Mendelssohn, and Sterndale Bennett; and although Hoffmann, who disliked all piano concertos, had called these works "symphonies with piano obligato," they really formed a most interesting contribution to the music for keyed instruments. Sir R. Stewart said, the present lecture would be terminated by a performance of Mendelssohn's finest work of this class, written at Bingen on the Rhine, in 1837. The concerto displayed much of the influence of J. S. Bach in the recitative passages for piano solo with which it began. Further on, the treatment of the instrument showed a perfect mastery of the Thalberg manner in passage-writing; the slow movement (perhaps the gem of the work) was Mozartian in form and beauty, and the finale, a scherzo in D major, was from first to last a perfect torrent of exultation.



CHORUS.

*f* TUTTI.

ther. In sa - cri - fice The flame shall

*f*

*con fuoco.*

The flame shall rise in sa - cri -

The flame shall rise in sa - cri -

rise,..... rise, in sa - cri -

fice,..... shall rise in sa - cri - fice! Be -

fice,..... shall rise in sa - cri - fice! Be -

fice,..... shall rise in sa - cri - fice! Be -

*ff* *f*

gin the an - cient ho - ly rite.

gin the an - cient ho - ly rite.

gin the an - cient ho - ly rite.

The first system of the musical score, measures 1-4. It features three vocal staves (Soprano, Alto, Tenor) and a piano accompaniment. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are "gin the an - cient ho - ly rite." The piano part consists of a steady eighth-note accompaniment in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand.

*sf* Praise our Al - migh - ty Fa - ther! *f* A -

*sf* Praise our Al - migh - ty Fa - ther! *f* A -

*sf* Praise our Al - migh - ty Fa - ther! *f* A -

The second system of the musical score, measures 5-8. It continues with the same vocal and piano parts. The lyrics are "Praise our Al - migh - ty Fa - ther! A -". The piano part features a more active accompaniment with chords and moving lines. Dynamic markings *sf* (sforzando) and *f* (forte) are present.

way!..... a - way!..... a -

way!..... a - way!..... a -

way!..... a - way!..... a -

The third system of the musical score, measures 9-12. The lyrics are "way!..... a - way!..... a -". The piano part continues with a consistent accompaniment. Dynamic markings *sf* are used at the beginning and end of the system.

way! Thus blend our hearts,..... thus blend our

way! Thus blend our hearts, thus blend our

way! Thus blend our hearts, thus blend our

hearts,..... to - ge

hearts,..... our hearts to - ge

hearts,..... our hearts to - ge

## TENOR SOLO.

In sa - cri - fice the flame shall rise! Be -

ther! A - way!

ther! A - way!

ther! A - way!

gin the an - cient ho - ly rite! Be - gin the

A - way!

A - way!

**Tutti.**

Be - gin the an - cient

Be - gin the an - cient

**Solo.**

an - cient ho - ly rite! Be - gin the an - cient

ho - ly rite!..... A - way!..... a -

ho - ly rite!..... A - way!..... a -

ho - ly rite!..... A - way!..... a -

ho - ly rite! A - way!..... a - way!.....



The lecturer having previously explained and illustrated the salient points of this fine composition, the concerto followed: a small orchestra, led by Herr Carl Berzon, accompanying it. The pianoforte part was played with much *aplomb* by Miss Adeline Wheeler, a student of the Irish Academy of Music, and a mere child. After the concerto had concluded the three students, Mesdames Jones, Wayland, and Wheeler, were publicly presented by Mrs. Lloyd (Provost's House), with handsomely bound volumes of the works of Chopin, Bach, and Mendelssohn. Sir R. Stewart then made his acknowledgments to the numerous individuals and firms in Ireland, England and the United States, who had aided him by pictures, models, music, information, and good offices, especially referring to Mr. Hingston, of Trinity College, who had suspended the pictures and arranged the instruments for each of the six lectures, and the proceedings terminated with cheers for the lecturer from the assembled students.

### Dannreuther on the Opera.

(From the London Musical Standard.)

Mr. Dannreuther's paper on Opera in *Macmillan's Magazine* for this month embodies the same views which he has already expressed in his Wagner pamphlet. It contains some striking, and often true, but generally exaggerated, characterizations of composers and styles. We need not go back with him to the origin of opera, and those vague statements about Greek plays and the Renaissance which so many writers repeat, but which have no more bearing on the opera of to-day than the "Frogs" of Aristophanes upon Robertsonian comedy. What he has to say upon Weber is worth quoting. He remarks:—

"And now, before I turn, or rather return to the frivolous side of the matter—to the sugar plums and fireworks of Rossini, to the moon-shine sentimentalities of Bellini; the couplets and *contredanses* of Auber; the revolting *olla podrida* of Meyerbeer; the *can-can* of Offenbach—before I ask the reader to descend with me this slippery staircase into a veritable musical morass, there is but one great and earnest musician left to speak of—Carl Maria von Weber.

Weber is the originator of the German romantic opera. In his time a great revival was going on in German literature. In opposition to the classicism of Goethe and his friends, German poets began to look to the traditions of their own nation for subject-matter. The remains of mediæval manners and superstitions were illuminated with a faint glimmer of poetical life. Spanish and Hindoo dramas were being translated; Teutonic myths, legends and stories were resuscitated; and above all, the delicate flowers of German people's-song, dating far back into the middle ages, were gathered and safely housed before the breath of the present antipoeitical industrialism had entirely stifled them. To the tender voices of German Volkslieder Weber listened intently, and the whole of his operatic music became imbued with their healthy cadences and naïve charm. Without being conscious of it he came to be a better exponent of the so-called romantic tendencies than the romantic writers themselves. Weber has shown German musicians what a specifically German phraseology should be like. His melodious diction furnishes in many respects the germs of Wagner's. He has enriched the art of dramatic composition in many different ways; but in one case, as in Gluck's, the fact must be admitted that he did not take the last and decisive step towards the construction of a real musical drama, though he was at times very near to it. He did not see that it was the province of the dramatic poet to dictate the forms, and of the musician to lend emotional expression only. He tried to construct the whole drama on the basis of his Teutonic melody; and in the work wherein he strove most earnestly for this end, *Euryanthe*, his largest and his favorite opera, he failed most decidedly."

In the above peeps out that strange infatuation for "Teutonic myths" and "German people-song" which seems to possess the Wagner circle; and of which, we suppose, the ridiculous story of "Lohengrin" is an example. Presently Mr. Dannreuther gives us his view of Rossini. He says:—

"When, just now, I talked of descending into an operatic morass by a slippery staircase, on the last step of which I picture to myself Verdi's '*Traviata*' looking down upon Offenbach's '*Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein*' actually in the mire, I placed the *divino maestro* Rossini on the landing at the top. And such a position would be appropriate for him even if he were not the first and earliest of the group of Italian and French composers I now have in view. Many of genius as he certainly was, he seems scarcely to have possessed such a thing as an artistic conscience. The fact is, that in nearly all his works the drama so earnestly striven for by the great French school of Gluck and Cherubini, is shamefully neglected, and the opera consists of operatic melody. Robert Schumann characterized Rossini's melodies with a bold metaphor—'*Teutonisches Fleisch ohne Geist*' (flesh à la Tüban, without spirit). When Schumann said this, he probably had some opera-seria of Rossini's, say *Tancredi* or *Senjéamide*, rather than the light and sparkling pieces such as *Il Barbiere* in his mind's eye. Certainly Rossini's works are perfect orgies of melody, but of melody in the *diletante* sense of the word, not of that noble and refined type which is to be found almost invariably in the masterpieces of Mozart and Weber. It is a kind of melody contrived for the convenience of singers—a melody of stereotyped turns and phrases, of ever-recurring conventional *flouriture* and commonplace *remplissage*. At times Rossini's merry and rhythmical accompaniments stand in such

strange contrast to the dramatic situation, that one is tempted to imagine the composer keeping up a facetious comment, indulging in a little private *badinage* with the orchestra just to show he is not so much in earnest as would appear from the tragic looks and contortions on the stage. Rossini's opera was more a matter of fashion than of art. A piece lasted for a season, and was forgotten; perhaps he warmed up bits of it, and stuck them into the next. Was not one tune as good as another? And who cared about dramatic propriety, or the like antiquated rubbish? If the public of one town liked long strings of passages, of another sweet *cantilena*, of a third endless *crescendo*, or the roll of sleigh-bells, the master was complacent, and furnished them by the yard—*ad infinitum*. I am far from asserting that everything in Rossini was frivolous, for out of his thirty operas, so many of which have disappeared without a trace, have we not got *Il Barbiere*, the second act of *Tell*, and many single lovely things besides, scattered far and wide? I say only that he did not always work for art's sake, and that his conscience was made of rubber."

This assessment is, on the whole, not unjust; earnestness is exceptional in Rossini. But it must be with some soreness, we imagine, that those whose idol is Wagner reflect upon his gift of tune, or they would not be so persistently hard upon him. Mr. Dannreuther proceeds to tell us that Rossini's successors—Bellini, Donizetti, and Verdi, all men of very real musical gifts—do not demand much attention. They merely metamorphosed Rossini's melody. Bellini rendered it sickly and sentimental; Donizetti more declamatory and commonplace; Verdi blatant and violent. As for the drama they left it, if anything, in a worse plight than it had been before. He considers that—

"The comic opera of France, as it is represented by Auber, has this one advantage over the popular Italian works—that it is all of a piece. You are not eternally swung to and fro on a see-saw, alternating between highly impassioned melody and mere musical sawdust. French librettists have a sure and safe theatrical method, which acts as a wholesome check upon their exuberant gaiety so apt to be extravagant; and French composers of *vaudevilles* and *opéra comiques*, from Escudier and Boieldieu to Auber, have known how to keep their style up to the mark supplied by their librettists. I look upon Auber's sprightly tunes as the *beau idéal* of both characteristic phases of French music—the *couplet* and the *contredanse*. Frenchmen have instinctively felt the representative character of Auber's music, and they have accordingly bestowed their special favor more upon his numerous productions for the *opéra comique* than upon his veritable masterpiece, *Le Muette de Portici*, wherein he takes a flight far higher and reaches a greater artistic eminence. In fact, *Masaniello*, as the work is called in England, is, in as much as intensity of effect and originality of musical treatment are concerned, far beyond the narrow though amusing range of modern French operas. The extraordinary *verve* and fire, and the pointed coarseness with which Auber manipulated his materials, are worthy of high praise. Unfortunately, neither Auber nor Scribe (his favorite librettist) in their later works thought fit to advance in the direction of quick and decisive action and drastic brevity of musical exposition, which might have led them towards the drama we have in view."

It is against Meyerbeer, as has been the case before, that Mr. Dannreuther and his friends express most bitterness. If, he says, Rossini's artistic conscience was of a very elastic nature, it may be asserted with at least equal truth that Meyerbeer did not possess such a thing at all. He wanted to succeed at any risk or cost, and he managed to succeed accordingly:—

"If one looks beneath the drastic *coups de theatre*, the scenical pomp and glitter, the dazzling brilliancy of orchestral color, at the specifically musical gifts displayed in one of Meyerbeer's monster operas, one finds them surprisingly meagre. Taking into consideration the number of genuine and powerfully emotional effects he produces in *Robert*, *Les Huguenots*, and *Le Prophète*, one is astonished to find, on closer examination, how poor the melodious kernel of his work really is; but he was by nature excessively clever. Whatever of a technical sort a musician can gain from the example of predecessors and contemporaries, he quickly assimilated. From the Italians he derived the popular manner of treating the human voice; from the French and Germans the refined and complicated method of handling the orchestra. And in the course of a protracted experience, by dint of incessant exertion, he managed to develop his keen instinct for bizarre and telling instrumental combinations and stage effects, into a most formidable dramatic power."

"Meyerbeer began his career with sacred odes to Klopstock's texts, and with an oratorio. His first opera, *Jephtha's Daughter*, was itself a semi-oratorio. When about 1818 he came to Italy and found Rossini's star in the ascendant, he quickly changed his tactics, and manufactured operas in the Italian style. When in 1831 *Robert* was given in Paris, he had again adopted an entire change of procedure. There he tries to unite German science with Italian melody and French refinement. His rapid changes of æsthetic creed were not the result of any organic development of his nature; they were much more a matter of calculation. His elaborate attempts to unite all the elements of the opera—good and bad—side by side, into one gorgeous and dazzling *pot-pourri*, remind one of the story of the newly-baptized Turk who liked the wine which his Christian religion did not forbid, but who chose to enjoy it together with a little Mohammedan polygamy."

"The librettist of Scribe, most versatile of French librettists, are as a rule, distinguished by remarkable cleverness of construction, by very ingenious use of stage effects and contrivances, and by an apparent absence of effort in the conception and execution. But in the opera books which he concocted for Meyerbeer, Scribe seems to have lost all natural ease and spontaneity; he worries and tortures himself and his public with extravagance after extravagance, with effort after effort, all brought forward only

to create a sensation at any cost, and with little or no reference to the original idea of the piece. It is not to be supposed that an experienced and *raie* dramatist like Scribe would have so frantically troubled himself, had not that most restless and ambitious of musicians with whom he was associated imperatively required so eccentric a canvas for his intrinsically dry, yet pretentious, music. Technically considered, *Robert le Diable* is the most important of Meyerbeer's works, though the stride in advance from this piece to *Les Huguenots* is enormous. In the latter, he has repeatedly reached a climax of dramatic effect, such as neither he himself nor any one else (if we except Wagner, who works with different means to totally different ends) has again attained or surpassed. But *Robert* inaugurated a new era at the *Grand Opéra*—the era of the greatest splendor and the greatest rottenness."

"At the time when *Robert le Diable* was written, the French *école romantique*, with Victor Hugo at the head, was in full bloom. The influence of Byron and Hoffman was felt and acknowledged by all claimants to poetical honors. Ghosts and devils, fierce love, hate, murder and madness, formed indispensable ingredients to every novel or play. The reading public was greedy of eccentricity, and the most violent contrasts could not appease its appetite for horrors. It was to satisfy the craving for such highly seasoned sentimental food that Scribe began to construct an opera book which should be a veritable *ne plus ultra*. He took for his hero the devil himself—*Satanas in propria persona*—gave him a coating of new Parisian varnish, transformed him into an extravagantly affectionate father, cooked him with *sauce piquante* of resuscitated dancing nuns, and then served him up to his friend Meyerbeer, who set him to the most appropriate music, and exhibited him, with unheard-of splendor at the *Grand Opéra*."

"We must give Meyerbeer credit for having understood the moral, or rather immoral wants of his time to perfection, and for having managed to connect, with marvellous ingenuity, the highly spiced and unwholesome food demanded by Parisian audiences."

"But it is just in his works that the intrinsic hollowness and rottenness of the *genre* called opera is more apparent than those of all his predecessors; it is the natural and inevitable opposition to the shameful abuses sanctioned by him, that has at length grown into a revolution which appears destined to clear the musical stage, and make room for purer and loftier aims."

"The opera, then, has ceased to live; and what we have now before us is the pitious spectacle of Monsieur Offenbach, with his friends dancing the *can-can* around its dead body!"

This, again, has some truth; though it is truth put spitefully. Would it not be more modest, and even more prudent, if Wagner's friends spoke more respectfully of other operatic composers? When one has read, both from the master and his followers, those bitter caricatures of other men's work, it is hard to approach their own creations without a prejudice arising from a natural resentment of their arrogant denunciation of others. If Meyerbeer was ready to get a sensation "at any cost," some of us may think that Wagner is willing to pay something for sensation also, when we reflect that "Lohengrin," if not precisely full of "ghosts and devils, fierce loves, hate, murder, and madness," had its visions, its magical metamorphoses, its quantum of love, a rather strong dose of hate (in Ortrud), and an attempted murder foiled by a justifiable homicide; and when we further remember what fantastic horrors, according to Dr. Hüffer, are in store for us in the Nibelungen-Ring. "Intrinsically dry, yet pretentious," is Mr. Dannreuther's expression in regard to Meyerbeer's music. Some people think that the selfsame words may very aptly apply to Wagner. Seriously, is it not time, and would it not be far better, to write more gently on this subject? The English musical critics do not rave at Wagner in this style; why should he and his advocates write so noisily at everybody else? We never read what these gentlemen write, without feeling inclined to say, "Hush! my dear fellow; don't talk so loud; we can hear you. Take a glass of water."

## Dwight's Journal of Music.

BOSTON, JULY 10, 1875.

### The Mammoth Wagner College in New York.

"There's millions in it."—Col. Sellers.

The newspapers throughout the land keep heralding the coming College of Music, for which a wealthy old bachelor in New York, anonymous, (some hint apocryphal, like Mrs. Harris), is said to have pledged his whole fortune of five million dollars; the first million to be spent in the erection of a magnificent building in the Central Park. A bill granting land for the purpose in that locality has passed the legislature and been signed by Governor Tilden, and the work will begin in the fall, the College meanwhile to go into operation in some temporary quarters. It all reads very grand, and at the same time very vague and fanciful.

We have many times for years past, in these columns, expressed our wonder that it should be so difficult to procure even a few thousands of dollars to endow some modest, sensible and sound beginning of a true school, or even a single professorship of music in one of our old Universities, or our large cities. Splendid donations and bequests are made continually in aid of almost every branch of science, literature and art,—branches often, in which few can possibly be interested; but no one gives for music, in which now nearly all are interested, and which has come to be recognized as an important element and influence in the whole life and culture of our people. Nobody gives say fifty or a hundred thousand to endow a musical professorship, or found a school in a modest, real way, enabling one live, quickening man to plant in a corner something which may grow to be of public consequence; but now, after long waiting and wanting, we have millions tossed down seemingly at random, with no doubt an honest, but an ignorant and wild ambition to do a grand, a sumptuous, unprecedented thing, and conjure up as if by magic in a day an institution which shall place this giant young republic at the head of all the world in Music as in all things. Millions, we say, (assuming that the whole story is not after all a myth, a cunning speculative hoax), are tossed down only to be scrambled for and captured outright by the most forward, enterprising partisans or mere speculators in the great growing business of music. For here we have an anonymous millionaire, wishing to do a generous, a patriotic thing for music, but with the most indefinite idea of what it is he wants, and probably quite ignorant of music, a board of trustees whose names have never been associated with music, and, for the one thing needful, in the conception of these worthy people, money in unlimited abundance. The first thing is to build, they think; to build to the outermost circumference of a plan, of an education full-grown and realized; how to put life and soul, and quickening genius into the huge structure seems to be postponed as an after-thought. Is not this beginning at the wrong end? Did any great school, university, art museum or academy, ever grow up in this way in this world? Great institutions grow from germs planted in a quiet, unpretending way. One man who has the gift, the genius for it, one Mendelssohn for instance, beginning quietly in his own way, and gathering a few kindred spirits round him, as he did in Leipzig, wields a greater power, and certainly a better, than all your millions, your ambitious plans, your sumptuous buildings and consummate apparatus; and one such true school, teaching a few, may do more for Art, than all these grandiloquent invitations to indefinite thousands of pupils.

As we remarked before, this magnificent project, or rather opportunity, is instantly forestalled, captured by a party, before the musical world at large has had a hint of it. All the persons mentioned as the first to be called upon to take part in the educational work so lavishly provided for, are followers of the new departure, of the Wagner school in music; those who happened to stand near at hand and to be much the fashion just now. And after many mysterious hints about the startling name that would in due time be announced for the grand head and manager in chief of the whole institution, it finally came out that no less a personage than Richard Wagner himself is to be invited or entreated to enthrone himself on this commanding central eminence, and be the very Pope of musical America, controlling the whole musical education—of the daughters chiefly, though pupils of the other sex will be admitted—that is a shrewd way of reaching all! So then, the whole musical education of this continent is to be based from the outset on the

exceptional in music, on what are still *disputed claims*, at war with all the classical traditions and the acknowledged greatest masters and models of the Art! Whether Wagner comes or not, the Wagner party seems to have intercepted this great building fund, so far as we are yet publicly informed—always provided that the whole story be not a mare's nest!

But will he come? Will he abandon Bayreuth, and forsake his gods, his Niebelungen Scandinavian mythology, on which he systematically and openly builds his whole "Art-work of the future," to come over here and begin all again under wholly changed circumstances? Will he renounce Wotan and Freia, Thor and Siegfried, to come to America and teach girls? Leaving his mythology behind him, what could he find here to take the place of it? He would have to fall back upon "Lo the poor Indian!"

In any case, does any serious musical person, in his sober senses, think it would be well that the great central musical institution of the country, which this aims to be,—that the whole musical education of our Republic, so far as these millions and these administrators of the fund have influence, should be founded upon Wagnerism, and controlled purely in the interest not of Art, but of a young aggressive, revolutionizing, and in truth very bigoted and narrow party!

With millions at disposal it is so easy to build from the outside! The whole creative thought and energy of the conception expends itself in an Aladdin's palace, ready made, whereinto musical education, on a supposed complete scale, has to fit itself and make itself at home and useful. It presupposes that such a complete and perfect education, fully carried out in great and little, knows beforehand just what sort of a house or body it will want to occupy; the educating spirit, the informing, animating soul and life of the great complex organism is to be put in afterwards, as if all true growth were not from within, beginning from the life, the vital germ. The College, in the dream of the founder and his associates, seems to consist in money and a spacious edifice, besides a vague hope of enticing into it for teachers and professors the greatest masters and musicians of the world. It is so easy to build on paper! So grand to "have a College," O editors, reporters, all so eloquent, without the least idea what College!

We presume all have read some of the glowing descriptions of the luxury and splendor of this proposed palace of music in the Central Park. Think of the spacious halls and corridors, the surrounding gardens, the galleries of sculpture and of painting, the beautiful concert rooms and theatres, the studied comforts for the organs of the sensitive singing birds, the winter garden artificially warmed, &c., &c. But if it is to be a Wagner palace, if the Wagnerian idea and ambition is to be the informing genius of the place, it will need many more conveniences. There must be cool streams in which the Rhine Daughters may practice their swimming exercises, without getting sea-sick while they sing, as it is said they do when the "Rheingold" is performed in Germany. There must be fine swings and hobby horses in a true blue celestial cloudland, where the Walkurie maidens, fateful equestrians, may learn to ride on air. There must be a theatre for spelling matches, where the young *Meister-speler* may practice to their hearts' content hard words out of the Master's most original librettos. Then there must be picturesque medieval shores, where all the devout young pupils and candidates for "Art work in the Future," may longingly await the Swan of their idolatry, the delivering knight in silver armor. And surely somewhere in the hidden heart and centre of this umbrageous garden of Armida

there must be a Venusberg; no Wagner paradise without that!

For teachers, professors, and musical conductors, in all branches, having Wagner, and Thomas for his chief adjutant, the college would have all; they with their followers are legion. A few things more, perhaps, would make the model universal school complete, (and, by the way, should there not be a place in it for Gilmore?) A professorship of Oratory there certainly should be; and until some one can suggest a better, we venture to offer the name of Mr. George Francis Train. Then the Wagner theory of music has one peculiar element which must not be neglected, that of Politics; "Music and Politics" is one of Richard's favorite topics; there must be a political professor, or whole faculty, by all means. Now Massachusetts has a famous politician, whom she would willingly part withal, to be the Dean in that department; from such new height of glory, seen of all men, how serenely he would smile upon the disappointed ambitions of the past; and for our "College," what more would be wanting to make the Niebelungen ring complete.

### Art Ennobling.

(From Lessing's "Laocöon.")

Even the civil power itself in Greece was thought to be not unworthily employed in confining the artist within his proper sphere; and a Theban law, as is well known, punished the representation of deformity. We laugh when we hear of this, but we laugh unwisely. Undoubtedly, the laws have no pretensions to any control over the motions of science; for the object of science is truth, and that is indispensable. But the object of the fine arts is pleasure, which is not indispensable.

Note by De Quincy.

It is hardly possible to crowd together into one sentence a greater amount of error, or error of a more dangerous quality. First, the right of the state to interfere with the Fine Arts is asserted upon the ground that they can be dispensed with, i. e., that they are of no important use; which ground is abandoned in the next sentence, where important influences upon the national condition are ascribed to one class of the Fine Arts, and more than this can hardly be involved in the character of indispensable, as attached to the sciences. Secondly, apart from this contradiction, the following dilemma arises; the Fine Arts have, or have not, important results for human happiness. In the first place, it is dangerous to concede a right of interference with them to the state (that is a right to cripple or defeat them); in the second case it is vexatious. \* \* Thirdly, unless the government are to misdirect themselves to that particular study, in which case they abandon their own appropriate functions, they must surrender themselves to the guidance of a body of artists: \* \* \* Fourthly, it is not true that science is in any other or higher sense 'indispensable' than the arts; the fact is that the gifts of science would be a most dangerous possession for any nation which was not guided in the use of them by a moral culture derived from manners, institutions and the arts.

Fifthly the fundamental error lies in affirming the final object of the Fine Arts to be pleasure. Every man, however, would shrink from describing Aeschylus or Phidias, Milton or Michael Angelo as working for a common end with a tumbler or a rope-dancer. 'No,' he would say the pleasure from the fine arts is ennobling, which the other is not. Precisely so; and hence it appears that not pleasure, but the sense of power and the illimitable, incarnated, as it were, in pleasure, is the true object of the Fine Arts; and their final purpose, therefore, as truly as that of Science, and much more directly, the exaltation of our human nature; which, being the very highest conceivable purpose of man, is least of all a fit subject for the caprices or experiments of the magistrates.



**HANDEL AND HAYDN SOCIETY.**—The address of the retiring President, Mr. LORING B. BARNES, made on the sixtieth anniversary of the Society, May 31, 1875, has been printed in a neat pamphlet, at the request of the members. It presents an interesting review of the whole history of the Society, with which Mr. Barnes has been officially connected more than twenty years, and all the while a zealous and effective laborer. The whole address is well worth reading, and we regret that we have room now only for a few extracts relating to the earlier history before the period of festivals.

It can hardly be supposed that the gentlemen who met in Mr. Graupner's little hall on Franklin street, on the evening of April 13, 1815, and who selected the names of the two great German composers, Handel and Haydn,—names which, when combined, were considered appropriate for the title of the new society which was then and there formed,—could have anticipated the measure of renown, which, in later years, should attach to the now honored name of the Handel and Haydn Society,—an organization which has become famous both in this country and in Europe, no less for its honorable record as a sacred music society than for the high standard adopted and well maintained in all its performances through the long series of years referred to. \* \* \* \* \*

In its earlier days, the Society enjoyed a high degree of prosperity; the performances at Boylston Hall being, as a rule, crowded with eager listeners, while numbers unable to gain admittance were often forced to drink in the much coveted musical strains as best they might from their position on the opposite sidewalk, when through the open windows the choral numbers found their way to the listening crowds thus congregated, impaired, it may be by distance, and yet welcome under the circumstances. In later years, and before the removal of the Society to the more spacious and elegant Melodeon Hall, I myself, then a young lad, was often a listener among the crowds outside the hall, and always there, unless admitted to the hall by some kind friend.

For the first twenty years, the performances of the Society were confined mainly to Handel's "Messiah," and Haydn's "Creation," in whole or in part, with selections of like character from well-known authors. Thus it will be seen that the music performed at these concerts was in character far in advance of that in general use; and the Society was even then making immense strides into the regions of art from the standpoint which then prevailed.

Neukomm's oratorio, "David," first performed February 28, 1836, and which became popular with the Society and its patrons, proved a very profitable venture. It was performed no less than seven times in the first season of its introduction; and thereafter, for many years, it was the favorite with all patrons of the society. \* \* \* \* \*

No salaries were paid for vocal assistance, which is quite in contrast with the present custom; but, in searching the records, I find the following under date of June 6, 1837: "Voted, To allow Marcus Colburn five dollars per evening for his services in the oratorio of 'David,' he having sung the part of David nine times during the season."

That sum, however did not appear to be satisfactory to Mr. Colburn; and the amount was doubled at a subsequent meeting of the Board.

As it does not appear that any other gratuities were voted, it is presumed that this sum was considered very liberal; but as the price of admission to the performances was uniformly fifty cents, and the seating capacity of Boylston Hall was circumscribed in size, the Society could hardly be expected to exhibit any very great degree of liberality in payment of salaries. \* \* \* \* \*

The removal of the Society to the new and commodious Melodeon Hall, which occurred in December, 1839, proved to be a fortunate enterprise; and many of the greatest successes of the Society are there recorded.

Handel's "Samson" was first brought out by the Society in January, 1845, under the administration of Jonas Chickering, and was given, during the remainder of that season, thirteen times, filling the hall on every Sunday evening consecutively, as "David" had in the old hall. And here I may add that the eminent musician, the late Mr. A. U. Hayter rendered valuable aid in its production.

The solos of the oratorios, even at that period, were, as a rule, taken by members of the Society;

and when the names of Anna Stone (who usually sang both the Soprano and Contralto rôles of the oratorios; for no contraltos could be found in those days), Marcus Colburn, Marshall Johnson, Leonard Marshall, Samuel Richardson, Charles W. Lovett, John Dodd, Incesse S. Withington, Thomas Ball, J. Q. Wetherbee, B. F. Baker, N. C. Byrum, and Henry M. Aiken, are given as principal vocalists, no doubt can exist of the efficient manner in which the solos were presented.

One well-remembered instance is recorded when a deviation from that custom took place in the substitution of the great English Baritone, Henry Phillips, then on a professional visit to this country, for that of Mr. Baker in the rôle of Harapha, in "Samson." The occasion was a memorable one; and the impression produced on all listeners by his artistic treatment of the difficulties of the rôle is remembered.

Eminent artists have from time to time been engaged to assist the Society in its performances, as the subjoined list shows, many of whom have often appeared, and some at not very remote periods.

A partial list embraces the names of John Brah-am, Henry Phillips, Carl Fornes, Cesare Radiali, Sig. Mario, Mme. Grisi, Mme. Caradori-Allen, Mme. Spohr-Zann, Mme. Henrietta Sontag, Mme. Catharine Hayes, Mme. Rudersdorff, Mme. Parepa-Rosa, Miss Adelaide Phillips, Miss Annie Louise Cary, Christine Nilsson, and many others of greater or lesser renown, as well as those of more recent date who sang under the title of the "Dolby Company," and which included the names of those eminent artists, Mme. Paty, Miss Wynne, Mr. Cummings and Mr. Charles Santley.

Still another important event may be referred to in the production of the "Elijah" of Mendelssohn, first performed in this country and by this Society, in February, 1848; the "St. Paul" by the same author, having received its first representation five years earlier. Thomas Ball, the now eminent sculptor, was the original "Elijah" in this country.

But "Elijah" was thought by many to be "deficient in melody;" and it failed to win for itself that degree of popularity which all were ready to accord to "Samson." We may well ask at this period, which of the two works named might be considered the greater favorite with the Society and the public; and we hazard nothing in saying that time which often works great changes, has reversed the opinions then expressed.

But the progress of the Society in the production of the great works of the masters up to the introduction of the "St. Matthew Passion" of John Sebastian Bach, by far the greatest of all the compositions of this style of writing known to exist (a work which it is confidently hoped may be heard in its entirety during the coming season), cannot be traced without extending these remarks to an unusual length.

### Music in New York.

NEW YORK, JULY 5. The popularity of the Thomas Garden Concerts continues undiminished and the attendance there is as large as ever, despite the industrious efforts of some of our newspapers to create an impression to the contrary. The possibility of Thomas being "run out" by such an enterprise as Gilmore's monstrosity does not deserve serious consideration. It is conceded that by far the larger portion of the audience at the Central Park Garden is now composed of people who come to hear the music. These persons are not likely to be enticed away by the strains of a brass band, or the theatrical splendors of a cascade of "real water" I don't know how many feet in height. Besides, on the ground of mere comfort, most people prefer a cool resort in which to pass a summer evening. Now there are certain corners, known to those who frequent the Thomas Garden, where, in the warmest weather, there is always a cool breeze. If there is any such spot in the Hippodrome I have never found it. In moderate weather the vast enclosure is warm; in hot weather it is unbearable. So much for the relative advantages of the so called rival institutions. That the Gilmore concerts should draw well is not surprising. They are patronized by thousands every evening and, as the music is not of a character to "interrupt ze general conversation," it is to be hoped that certain garrulous pa-

trons of the Thomas concerts will betake themselves thither. I am sure that Thomas would gladly be rid of them, for not a week passes without some scathing rebuke from him to these ill bred and ignorant people who keep up a continual buzzing during the performance of the music, to the annoyance of all decent folk. These animals can roam at large over nine tenths of the area of the Garden giving offence to no one, but there is a little space in the hall directly in front of the orchestra, and there the disciples of music usually assemble. For hearing, it is the worst place in the building, the disciple knows this, but meekly accepts the situation, as though he should say: "Take the greater part of the hall; take the best seats; take the best position for hearing, even though you will not listen; only I pray you, leave me this little corner where I can listen and be at peace."

The little band of listeners is assembled, hushed and attentive. The music begins. Then straight to the sacred spot comes the talker, accompanied by the female of his species. They select the seats farthest from the aisle, so as to oblige the greatest number of people to make way for them, and, being snugly ensconced where they can do the most harm, they sit during the remainder of the evening and "feebly fabulate and paddle about in the social slush" with infinite complacency.

The orchestra is playing the Andante to Schubert's Symphony in C.—A wonderful landscape lies before us in light and shade and dorée violet hues. Is it so far, so far away? or only dim through the mist of many tears? A sharp, quick grief is tugging at the violins. A sustained chord rolls away and dies like a sob, and then—"We fry ours in butter!"

Sic transit gloria!

Now, after allowing the talkers more space than they deserve, let me give a list of the pieces played on Thursday evenings since I last wrote.

#### THURSDAY EVENING, MAY 27.

Preludium, [first time].....Bach  
Impromptu, C minor, Op. 90, [new].....Schubert  
Bilder aus Osten, op. 66.....Schumann  
Rhapsodie Hongroise, No. 1, [new].....Liszt  
Symphony, No. 6, "Pastorale".....Beethoven  
Introduction,  
Nuptial Chorus, } 3d act Lohengrin.....Wagner  
March Tempo.....Strauss  
Waltz Du und Du.....Lassen  
Festival Overture.....Lassen

#### THURSDAY EVENING, JUNE 3.

Overture, Abencerragen.....Cherubini  
Variations, op. 56, on a Theme by Haydn.....Brahms  
Poème Symphonique, op. 31, [new].....Saint Saëns  
"Le Rouet d'Omphale,"  
Kaiser Marsch.....Wagner  
Symphony, No. 5, Lenore.....Liszt  
Rhapsodie Hongroise, No. 1, in F.....Liszt  
Nouvelle Meditation.....Gounod  
Solo part by Sixteen Violins.  
English Horn Obligato by Mr. J. Eller.  
Waltz, Telegrams.....Strauss

#### THURSDAY EVENING, JUNE 10.

Overture: "Consecration of the House".....Beethoven  
Forlane, } from Suite in C, No. 1.....Bach  
Bourrée, }  
Enter-acte, No. 1, "Rosamunde".....Schubert  
Symphony, B flat, No. 1.....Schumann  
Selections from 1st act Lohengrin.....Wagner  
Waltz [new] Vienna.....Strauss  
Saltarello.....Gounod

#### THURSDAY EVENING, JUNE 17.

Cavalry March.....Schubert  
Symphony No 1 in D.....Weber  
Overture: "Le Carnaval Romain,"  
Introduction, } "Tristan and Isolde".....Wagner  
Finale, }  
Rhapsodie Hongroise in D, No. 3.....Liszt  
Ballet music, Faust.....Gounod  
Romanza in G.....Beethoven  
Overture: "Siege of Corinth".....Rossini

Mr. Dudley Buck is now acting as assistant conductor at the garden concerts. This gentleman is well known as a distinguished musician and an excellent composer, while his manner of conducting an orchestra is in every respect satisfactory, and meets with great favor.

Concerning the great variety of new music which Mr. Thomas has performed this season, I will write in my next letter. A. A. C.



## The Boieldieu Centenary Fetes at Rouen.

(Correspondence of the London Musical Standard.)

ROUEN, June 14.

The quaint, beautiful old city from which I to-day date my letter has been since Saturday last in a state of enthusiastic excitement bordering on frenzy, and only to be fully understood by the Rouennais whose pride it is to call themselves the fellow-townsmen of Boieldieu. For some days past tens of thousands of eager pleasure-seekers and patriots have been flocking hither from every side, all bent upon taking part in the long-expected fêtes of which the centenary of the favorite—the people here have it “the immortal”—composer of the “Dame Blanche” and many another less known but almost equally tuneful work has been the occasion. On all sides resound the noise of beating drums, the echoes of blatan fanfares, and the songs of hundreds upon hundreds of orpheonists. In the streets traffic is rendered almost impossible for passing vehicles owing to the masses of spectators and the continual marching and countermarching of processions. One moment it is a choral society from Cherbourg, which walks past singing with all its lungs; the next, a band of fanfarists from Havre makes day unpleasant by its ungente music; or a troop of soldiers comes marching along, preceded by the rataplans of half-a-dozen drummers. Sometimes, at very awful moments, several processions arriving from different quarters of the town will meet, with an effect the reverse of harmonious, but wonderfully stirring and exciting. The houses are hung with flags, decorated with lanterns, glaring with devices of every sort, all in honor of a man who, though a hundred years have come and gone since his birth, is to-day the hero of the hour, his name on everyone's tongue, and his likeness on every breast.

It must be acknowledged that when Frenchmen do give a fête they give it brilliantly. The official programme of the Boieldieu commemoration is so lengthy that it requires eight closely-printed quarto pages to set forth the plain details of the many festivals that have taken or will take place during the four days set apart for the rejoicings by the civic authorities here. Not to linger on other matters than the purely musical, the celebration began on Saturday with a grand military concert, given by the various troops of Rouen and of St. Germain in front of the statue of Boieldieu on the quay. Yesterday (Sunday) was devoted to the monster Concours des Orpheonistes. In the early morning, some thousand singers, variously calculated at from three to five thousand, and composed of deputations from most of the leading amateur choral societies of France, assembled on the scene of the previous night's concert to execute Ambroise Thomas's “Hommage à la Boieldieu,” the cantata composed by the author of “Mignon” specially for the occasion. I was unfortunately absent from the town at the time, and missed this performance, which is said to have been remarkably fine. However, as the cantata will be repeated to-morrow at the Theatre du Cirque, with all the invaluable aid of M. Lamoureux and the Société de l'Harmonie Sacrée, I shall be able to give you a report a little later. With great difficulty I succeeded in attending the most interesting of the many orpheon competitions yesterday,—that of the Theatre des Arts. Four societies met here to contest the first prize, consisting of a golden wreath (presented by the Académie des Sciences, Arts, et Belles-Lettres de Rouen), and a money gift of 1,500f. The chorus selected as the test of excellence was entitled “Le Retour d'Amerique,” and emanates from the pen of M. Adrien Boieldieu, son of the great musician. Each of the choirs was compelled to execute this composition, and in addition one other chorus of its own repertoire, of which the choice was optional. The programme was as follows, selected by the different societies:—1. Société Ste. Cécile de Cherbourg, 60 executants, under direction of M. Barrière, “La Noce du Village” (Laurent de Rillé). 2. Les Orpheonistes Lillois, 110 executants, conductor, M. Boulanger, “Le Carnaval de Rome” (Amb. Thomas)—winners of the wreath. 3. Les Orpheonistes d'Amiens, 60 exec., conductor, M. Grigny, “La Danse des Sylphes” (Th. Semet). 4. Les Enfants

de Lutèce (Paris) 85 exec., conductor, M. Gaubert, “Hymne du Matin” (J. Haussens). Compulsory piece, “Le Retour d'Amerique” (M. Adrien Boieldieu). The latter is a bold taking composition, cast in a semi-patriotic mould, and devised so as to put the power of its interpreters to a tolerably severe trial. It affords several opportunities for the display of that rather unnatural French *bouche fermée* singing so much in vogue here. The results produced by this method of rendering pianos and pianissimos differ greatly according to the degree of perfection attained in it by each society. In some instances a capital imitation of very soft pocket-comb-and-paper music was attained. In others the chorus arrived at delicious effects, as of inferior violins played in the remote distance. Joking apart, I cannot say I greatly admire the system: it smacks of artistic trickery; and though at first by its peculiarity it charms, after a while one waries of those abrupt transitions from *ff* to *ppp*, which seem to form the basis of all the effects. The performances of the four societies were very unequal, but the first in every way, as regards execution, training, and ensemble, was most undoubtedly the Lille choir. Not only were the voices of this orpheon finer, especially in the tenors, but the subject selected by it was infinitely better fitted to show its strength than those chosen by its rivals. The precision and ease with which M. Thomas's “Carnaval de Rome” was given reflected the highest credit on conductor and choir. Next in order of merit, but a long distance behind, came the Paris Chorale. In the rendition of the compulsory subject, it was perhaps not far behind the Lille Society; but in the “Hymne du Matin” the Enfants de Lutèce had made an unfortunate choice. The Amiens and Cherbourg Orpheonistes cannot be named in a breath with the two foregoing chorales, which are certainly the best in the country. By the by, I remarked that the banner carried by the Cherbourg deputation bore the inscription, “Offerte par sa Majesté la Reine d'Angleterre.”

While this concours was progressing at the Theatre des Arts, similar competitions were going on in the Theatre Francais, and in four or five other halls. Of these want of time and space does not allow me to speak. This was not by any means all that the day accomplished. Simultaneously with the orpheon contest, were held the concours of the numerous brass bands and Fanfares at the Cirque and in the squares and public places of the town. In the evening the distribution of prizes took place in front of the Hotel de Ville. The jury was composed of many of the leading French musicians, amongst others MM. Leo Delibes, Lenepveu, Pasdeloup, Danbé, Paladilhe, &c., &c. President: M. Ambroise Thomas. The golden wreath competed for by the Fanfares fell to the lot of a Belgian society, the Cercle des XV de Binche. This will serve to show the deep interest which has been roused throughout French-speaking countries by these fêtes. Not only have the neighboring towns sent their deputations of musicians, but from the far-away South, from Toulouse and Cannes, from the East, from Paris, from Havre and Dieppe, and in the North from Lille, Valenciennes, and Belgium, have come scores and hundreds of competitors.

This evening a grand gala performance is to be given at the Theatre des Arts. The programme will be made up of Boieldieu's “Le Nouveau Seigneur du Village,” and two acts of the “Dame Blanche,” interpreted by MM. Nathan, Barrée, Mmes. Brunet, Lafleur, Ducasse, and Mlle. Révilly. At the conclusion of the representation a short *pièce de circonstance* will be recited by M. Maubant at the Comédie Francaise.

To-morrow will witness the last act in the festival, and perhaps the most interesting from an artistic point of view. In the morning a Messe Solennelle at the Cathedral, under the direction of M. Lamoureux, and in the evening a grand miscellaneous concert by the Société de l'Harmonie Sacrée at the Theatre du Cirque (terminating with the cantata “Hommage à Boieldieu,”) will worthily close a series of fêtes which have been projected and so far carried out with remarkable spirit and success. It was hoped that Madame Carvalho would have taken part in to-morrow's proceedings, but unfortunately a miserable question of money has led to a rupture and refusal. M. Lamoureux went up to Paris to-day expressly to endeavor to induce a change in Madame Carvalho's determination; with what result I cannot say, though I hear that his mission has not been successful. If this be the case, the prima donna will be replaced by some more public-spirited and perhaps equally capable cantatrice from the Opera or Opera Comique.

## Special Notices.

DESCRIPTIVE LIST OF THE  
LATEST MUSIC,  
Published by Oliver Ditson & Co.

Vocal, with Piano Accompaniment.

- My Father's Bible. 3. Ab to e. Richards. 30  
“Fond memory oft recalleth  
The days of early youth.”  
A bright melody and beautiful song.
- That's what's the Matter. 2. Bb to e. Straight. 30  
“T—H—A—T That”  
Merry comic song for “the boys.”
- Mem'ry's Golden Crown. Song and Cho. 3. Bb to d. Danks. 35  
“Mother, love and holy blessings,  
One and all are resting there.”  
All such songs aim to be popular favorites, and this one fully deserves to be.
- Take me back to Home and Mother. Song and Cho. 3. Ab to f. Huntly. 35  
“F r on earth there is no other  
Kindness like a mother's care.”  
Beautiful Home song. Don't fail to sing it.
- Darkness turned to Light. Ill. Title. Song and Cho. 2. D to e. Danks. 40  
“How like a benediction shone  
The glory on his face.”  
One of those tender, affecting ballads that it is good to sing and hear.
- Poor Ellen. 4. E minor and major to e. Pinsuti. 35  
“She listened—a well known voice to her,  
‘T was nought but the rush of the startled deer.”  
Effective and pathetic.
- My Love has gone a-sailing. 2. Eb to e. Molloy. 35  
“The sails spread out their white wings,  
And fast the ship sped on.”  
A real good old fashioned sea song. Sing it by the ocean side.

- Within the Cellar's depths I sit. 3. F to f. Fischer. 30  
“Im tiefen Keller sitz ich hier.”  
A bass or baritone song in praise of Rhein-wine.
- Pepita, the merry Gipsy Maid. 4. G minor and major to f. Knight. 35  
“Viva la bella,  
La Zingarella.”  
Capital song, which begins a little soberly, and ends very merrily.

Instrumental.

- Home Treasures. Smallwood, ea. 40  
No. 7. The Bridge. 2. F.  
Melody of a popular song, sweetly and simply arranged.
- On the Train. Galop. 3. Bb Fernald. 30  
People do not usually “galop” on a train, but if they do, here is the very best music for them.
- Moonlight. Serenade. 4. Db. Richards. 40  
Very bright moonlight, evidently, as the music suggests all sorts of bright things, and has the merit, for a serenade, of keeping the people awake to hear it.
- Petit Carnival. 6 easy Dances for 4 hands. Streabogg.  
No. 3. Schottische. 2. G. 35  
5. Galop. 2. F. 35  
Easy and pretty instructive pieces.
- Old Folks at Home. Varied. 4. Eb. Grobe. 75  
Mr. Grobe's variations are made “by one rule,” which happens to be a very good one, and this piece, which is numbered Op. 193, is quite attractive.
- Danse Neapolitaine. 4 hands. 5. Db. S. Smith. 1.00  
This would not be difficult were it not for the Presto movement. It is a rapid, exciting Tarantelle.
- Cheer Up! Galop. 2. G. Lowell. 30  
One of the very sweetest and very easiest of Galops.
- Clear Blue Sky. Op. 104. 3. G. Lichner. 30  
A clear, sweet melody, elegantly arranged.
- La Fille du Regiment. Fantasie. 6. Ab S. Smith. 1.00  
As the original melodies are brilliant, this must be considered more than that, or a super-brilliant fantasia.

ABBREVIATIONS.—Degrees of difficulty are marked 1 to 7. The *key* is marked with a capital letter: as C, B flat, &c. A small Roman letter marks the highest note, if on the staff, an *italic* letter the highest note, if above the staff.

